OCS

12/7/78

2017

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
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Dear Mr. Girdner:

I have received your letter of November 30, concerning your desire for information and documents in connection with the mass deaths of members of the Peoples Temple Mission Village at Jonestown, Guyana on November 18, 1978.

In accordance with your request, we are now providing you with copies of lists of the positively identified remains as we receive the information from the USAF Mortuary at Dover, Delaware. Hopefully, we will be able, in the course of time, to send you copies of the Reports of Death.

At this particular moment, we cannot provide you with copies of passports, passport applications or a list of the Jonestown survivors. We have this question under consideration in the Department and as soon as we are able to resolve it, we will advise you promptly.

I was very pleased to meet your Deputy Director, Mr. Howard Roland, last week. I only wish that it had been under happier circumstances.

Sincerely,

Lois M. Day
Director Designate
Office of Citizens Consular Services

Mr. Ted Girdner, Director
Division of International Operations
Social Security Administration
P.O. Box 1756
Baltimore, Maryland 21203

CA/SCS/PSH:ll:dg 12/7/78

Clearance in draft

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
P.O. BOX 1706, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21203, U.S.A.

BUREAU OF RETIREMENT AND SURVIVORS INSURANCE

NOV 30 1978

SPR52

Mr. Alan A. Gise
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Overseas Consular Services
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Gise:

The Social Security Administration wishes to obtain information concerning the identities of the individuals who died at the Peoples Temple Mission Village in Guyana on November 18, 1978. Mr. Robert Dalton of your Department indicated by telephone that he sees no legal problem in the release of such information for our purposes and suggested that we write to you outlining our needs.

Information bearing on the identities of the individuals who died at the Mission Village is needed by the Social Security Administration for the purposes of adjudicating claims for survivor benefits which will be filed by surviving relatives of those who died at the Mission Village. All such claims are to be processed and adjudicated in the Division of International Operations at Baltimore, Maryland.

The information we are requesting is as follows:

1. Names of decedents whose bodies have been positively identified.

   We would like to arrange to receive this information on a flow basis as soon as it can be released by the State Department. Such information may be telephoned to us on a daily basis for use in identifying claims for which primary evidence of death will be available. This information will enable our offices to avoid the development of circumstantial evidence of death in such cases. If this is agreeable, such information should be telephoned directly to Mr. Howard A. Roland's office by calling FTS 934-0125 or commercial 301-594-0125.

2. Primary evidence of death for decedents whose bodies have been positively identified.

   As a followup to the information in 1 above, we would like to arrange for receipt of documentary evidence of death, such as a death certificate issued by the Guyanese Government or a Report of the Death of an American Citizen issued by the Department of State, at the earliest possible date. This evidence will be

used to document claims for survivor benefits on the decedents' earnings records. Such documents should be mailed to the Division of International Operations, Post Office Box 7684, Baltimore, Maryland 21207, as soon as they become available.

3. List of all individuals who are believed to have been residing at the Peoples Temple Mission Village at Jonestown, Guyana, on November 18, 1978.

   In this connection, we would like you to furnish us excerpted information from the United States passports which were found at the Mission Village. Photocopies of the pages showing the names and identifying information would be appreciated. We would like, also, copies of all of the signatures on the petitions recently circulated at the Mission Village which we understand are in the custody of your Department. Any other rosters of names of the inhabitants of the Mission Village which the Department of State has access to would be extremely useful to the Social Security Administration.

   This information will form a part of the circumstantial evidence of death which will have to be developed in each case when a claim is filed on the account of an individual who allegedly died at the Mission Village on November 18, 1978, but whose body was not positively identified.

4. Lists of inhabitants of the Mission Village who survived.

   We would like to obtain an accurate and complete list of all of the known survivors of the Peoples Temple Mission at Guyana. This information will also be used as part of the circumstantial evidence of the deaths of individuals whose bodies were not identified. The Social Security Administration would like this information as soon as it can be released by the Department of State.

Sincerely yours,

Ted D. Girdner
Director, Division of
International Operations